



For release on 30 March 2010

ANNOUNCING A NEW FUTURE FOR BRIDGE THROUGH UNIVERSAL MEMBERSHIP

Bridge, the popular card game played by an estimated 150,000 people, is about to usher in the biggest ever shake-up in the way it is administered and run.

From 1 April 2010, universal membership will see the ranks of players who are members of the English Bridge Union, the game's national body, double to around 45,000 - with each paying a small sum that goes to the Union every time they play.

Universal membership through the pay-to-play scheme is being introduced at around 600 affiliated clubs up and down the country. The modernisation of the way the game of duplicate bridge is organised and financed will help clubs and the game thrive in the 21st Century.

The new era will be supported by a streamlined EBU which continues to address its own management through efficiencies, modernisation and reform.

Sally Bugden, EBU Chairman, said: "This process is the result of over two years consultation with thousands of bridge players – members and non-members alike – and our affiliated clubs and regional network of counties. These are exciting times for bridge in England and we are looking forward to a great future for the game."

Further information

An area on the EBU has been created for Press and Media here: www.ebu.co.uk/um/media, which includes the full statement from the EBU Chairman, interviews with interesting bridge players, more information on Universal Membership at the EBU, generic bridge images, EBU logo, and information about the EBU.

Or alternatively, please contact Sally Bugden, Chairman or Barry Capal, General Manger, on **01296 317 200** or email **Barry@ebu.co.uk** for more information on Universal Membership.

Who plays bridge?

Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, tennis legend Martina Navratilova, actor Omar Sharif and the world's top investor, Warren Buffett...to name just four. In this country an estimated 150,000 people play bridge regularly in hundreds of clubs in cities, towns and villages up and down the land.

What is bridge?

Bridge is a trick-taking card game of skill and chance. It is played by four players who form two partnerships (sides); the partners sit opposite each other at a table. The game consists of the auction (often called bidding) and play, after which the hand is scored. Further information on the EBU and bridge can be found on the Media section of our website, please view www.ebu.co.uk/um/media

About the English Bridge Union

The English Bridge Union was formed on 23 May 1936 and is a non-profit making membership-funded organisation committed to promoting the game of duplicate bridge. It is also a National Bridge Organisation in its own right affiliated to the European Bridge League and the World Bridge Federation. New players are the lifeblood of the game and the EBU are keen to encourage them. For more information on the English Bridge Union please visit: www.ebu.co.uk/um/media